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**Family and Community Engagement Initiative  
2004-2006**

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**The Background:**

Both the *No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001* and *T.C.A. 49-2-305* require that school districts develop parent involvement policies and corresponding plans which engage parents in their children's schools. Both federal and state laws require that the Department approve these required plans.

Because the Department understands the importance of parent involvement to improving the academic achievement of students, the Department built on these compliance requirements to develop a systemic approach to engaging families and communities in Tennessee schools. The Department incorporated the State Board of Education's Parent Involvement Policy into this systemic approach.

In Fall 2004, the Department partnered with the Tennessee Schools Board Association to educate key leaders within school districts of these new requirements and the Department's Family Friendly Schools initiative. Each district was asked to register a team of at least 6 members, including a school board member, Director of Schools, parent, community member, Title I director, and principal, for a year long professional development series on developing and implementing effective family and community engagement policies and plans. 131 district teams registered and attended this year long professional development series. Each district team gathered data about the involvement of parents and community members in the district's schools, analyzed that data, and developed family and community engagement policies and plans targeted at boosting student achievement.

In Fall 2005, each district was visited by a NCLB Field Service Consultant to approve the required plans and to monitor implementation. Each district was responsible for sharing the process that it used to develop the required plans and a best practice that it was implementing to engage families and communities.

As of March 2006, all districts have received full approval of their parent involvement plans. Throughout the state, consultants from the Department of Education have gathered best practices to disseminate.

This presentation will highlight some of the most innovative best practices that Tennessee districts have implemented to engage families and communities to improve student achievement. This information is also available on the Department's website at <http://www.state.tn.us/education/fedprog/fpparentinvolve.php>.

**The Recommendation:**

For information purposes only; no action required.